

Mayor's Council on Disability  
Chattanooga, Tennessee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 1, 2009

John Jackson, Chairperson  
Bryon Kluesner, Vice Chair  
Carol Martin, Secretary  
Jill Hindman, Parliamentarian

Council Members

Jim Queen, CARTA Care-A-Van  
Tommy Gates, Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation  
Carolyn Boyd, Signal Centers  
Phillip Stevens, City of Chattanooga  
Karl Epperson  
Nichol Myers, AIM Center  
Robert White  
Katie Jones, Merrill Lynch

Mayor's Office Participants

Matt Lea, Assistant to Mayor  
Jay Piercy, OMA City Compliance Officer  
Kathie Fulgham, Mayor's Office

Absent

Jill Hindman

Visitors

Pat Howard  
Kim Printz, Career Center  
Chris Jackson, TN DMRS

Sandy Booher welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that the presentation by NAMI that was on the Agenda would be postponed until the August meeting. Sandy then welcomed the new officers, John Jackson, Chair; Bryon Kluesner, Vice Chair, Carol Martin, Secretary and Jill Hindman who remains Parliamentarian. Sandy thanked everyone who served for the past two and one half

years. At this point Sandy turned the meeting over to John Jackson, the new Chair.

John also thanked the past officers. In Matt Lea's absence, there was no one to report on the vacant MCD positions.

In Jill's absence, Chris Jackson, a visitor, was asked to report on the DD Council. She stated that the DD Council has merged with the MH Council and with Alcohol and Drug Council. The membership has been limited to fifty, but anyone may attend the meetings. Jill Hindman is the current chair of the DD Council. The merged Council will be holding elections very soon. There will be a combined meeting next Tuesday at the AIM Center. If anyone has any questions, please e-mail me at [chris.jackson@state.tn.us](mailto:chris.jackson@state.tn.us)

WhoFest was next on the agenda. Sandy Booher said it turned out great. There were a lot of artists with disabilities. The event was really inclusive. Sandy said that there was an incredible young teen who played the keyboard. He played Blues and sang like Ray Charles. There was a woman opera singer who sang a variety of styles – opera, folk and songs from musicals. She was also fantastic, according to Sandy. There were several artists from the AIM Center and from Rosewood Center. Orange Grove had a table to discuss their services with guests. Ann Shea of Orange Grove had a dance workshop for the guests. There was also a man there that did workshops with people with developmental disabilities; he gave a demonstration that included a circle of drummers. Sandy said that she will be passing a lot of this information on to the Go!Fest Committee. John added that Sandy was there with her clay and she invited the crowd to work with the clay.

WhoFest was conceived by David Smotherman from Winder Bender and was produced in conjunction with Allied Arts, VSA and Orange Grove. The event was sponsored by a grant from Allied Arts and a grant from VSA. According to John and Sandy, the event will be even bigger next year. It will be an annual event at Renaissance Park over Memorial Day weekend.

In Kathie Fulgham's absence, Jay Piercy said that the Go!Fest Committees are continuing to meet and that a lot of entertainment has been lined up. There will be a Touch a Truck exhibit and hopefully a Life Flight Chopper on display. John said that he has already received applications from three artists to participate in the Art Expo.

Phillip Stevens announced that the City Council passed a resolution to allow the Mayor's Office to appropriate funds to help toward the accessible playground for Warner Park.

Phillip was asked about the MCD website and inquiries. He said that there were no inquiries but finally all of the minutes were up to date.

John asked for a motion to approve the most recently submitted minutes. They were approved with no changes.

Jim Queen, CARTA said that CARTA was in line for \$400,000 to \$600,00 in stimulus money that must be used on capital expenditures, no operating expenditures. There is currently congressional discussion about allowing 10% of stimulus funds to go into a one year operating budget. CARTA's plans for the stimulus money include a new surface at the CARTA complex, parking garage updates and four new hybrid vehicles that will arrive this month. There is a possibility that CARTA may get 10 in the near future. These are projected to replace some of the neighborhood shuttles. Hopefully, CARTA may get another Care-A-Van or two out of these funds, also. Jim also mentioned that SETHRA's new hub already has a roof on it. CARTA has been in discussion with SETHA about coordinating transit trips in the future. Jim said he considers this a four or five year plan for the nine or ten county TN area and possibly four N GA counties.

Jim also reported that Sandy Booher, Chris Cleehammer and Laura Smart from SETHRA, Wayne Owens from STS and himself have been selected to participate in a Project Easter Seal Committee which will meet in July in Washington, DC to develop just such a transportation model program. Easter Seals will be behind this group for 12 months

to help expedite the project. This team was selected from 40 applicants and 15 teams across the country. Jim said it was exciting that, after 16 years of talking about coordinated transportation in the Chattanooga area, he is seeing the beginning. He said it will take lots of resources and advice from MCD, City Officials, County Officials and the general public as well as the CARTA Advisory Council. Jim believes that a coordinated transit system will really benefit the region.

John asked the audience to introduce themselves. Kim Printz, Career Center; Pat Howard wants to help with GO Fest and Chris Jackson, DMRS.

Karl Epperson described a situation that he ran across on the way to the meeting today. He said a homeless gentleman in a wheelchair that clearly needed assistance was talking to police officers. Apparently the police officers had no jurisdiction to deal with this situation. The EMT's said they didn't have the authority either. Eventually someone from TN Adult Protective Services arrived and authorized the medics to put the gentleman into the ambulance and take him to a hospital. Karl said that this situation demonstrated the fact that there is no emergency response for homeless people in the city. There was discussion regarding 211 and other agencies and it was agreed that the MCD members would look into this and offer a suggestion to the Mayor for an Emergency Response Plan for such occasions.

Katie Jones asked Phillip about adding a link to the MCD on the home page of the City's website. It is currently under the Mayor's page. Phillip indicated that in the past there has not been enough room. Katie made a motion that Phillip take this subject up with the Mayor.

Sandy asked Phillip if someone was working to make the website accessible. He said it was currently being worked on. He said the main pages are complete but there are lots of sub pages to do. He said it may take a year to complete.

Sandy announced that she is meeting with the Mayor on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.

There was discussion about accessibility throughout the city and who to contact if one came across a situation that was inaccessible. Examples include curb cuts that are a good distance from the disabled parking at the malls; low toilets; revolving doors; bumpy driveways, etc. It was suggested that most places of business are just not aware that some of these things are problems and that usually most are willing to fix the problem when told about it.

Bryon said that he can confirm that Marlee Matlin is coming to the UTC campus for the October Disability Awareness month activities. He also said the UTC's mascot, Scrappy, will be part of Go!Fest. Bryon's trip to Australia starts in nine days and he plans to do a video documentary of the trip. He is considering entering it into the Chattanooga International Film Festival that is coming up at the end of August.

Tommy Gates said he recently attended a wheelchair softball clinic in Alpharetta, GA. They use what they call a Miracle Field for manual and power chair users. Tommy thought that a field like this would be a great addition to Chattanooga. Shepherd Center in Atlanta is trying to put together a team to take to the Nationals. There is a group in Nashville that does this, also. Jim Queen said he has tried for at least six years to bring up a program to the City that Ronald McDonald has. They provide the seed money and most of the funding but Parks and Rec has been resistant, presumably due to maintenance costs. Jim said he believes there are over 150 McDonald Miracle Fields and their only requirement is that the field be named McMiracle Field.

Karl said that Independent Living Aids will provide over a dozen wheel chairs to this year's Go!Fest.

With the first Monday of the month falling after the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, the Council agreed to delay the next meeting until the following Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at the DRC.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Carol Martin, Secretary  
Mayor's Council on Disability